

IT IS CLAIMED

1. A method for implementing electronic commerce transactions via a data network, the method comprising:

identifying a regulated item selected by a customer, the regulated item corresponding to an item which satisfies predetermined criteria, the predetermined criteria indicating that the item is prohibited from being purchased by the customer; and

taking action to prevent the purchase of the regulated item via the data network by the customer.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said taking action is automatically implemented at a server system configured to implement electronic commerce transactions between an on-line merchant and the customer.

3. The method of claim 1 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

4. The method of claim 3 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific time periods.

5. The method of claim 3 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific days.

6. The method of claim 3 wherein the regulated item corresponds to a class of regulated products selected from the group consisting of: alcohol products, tobacco products, and dairy products.

7. The method of claim 1 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which prohibit delivery of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons under a minimum age.

5 9. The method of claim 1 wherein said taking action comprises modifying a display of items available for purchase by the customer, wherein the display modification includes restricting display of items which are prohibited from being purchased by the customer based upon the predetermined criteria.

10 10. The method of claim 1 wherein said taking action comprises taking action to prevent the customer from adding the regulated item to an electronic shopping cart associated with the customer.

15 11. The method of claim 1 wherein said taking action comprises taking action to prevent the customer from completing a checkout operation for the regulated item.

12. The method of claim 1 wherein said taking action comprises removing the regulated item from an electronic shopping cart associated with the customer.

20 13. The method of claim 1 wherein said predetermined criteria includes at least one regulation code parameter for use in identifying items which are associated with a class of regulated products; and

wherein said regulated item has associated therewith a specific regulation code parameter.

25 14. The method of claim 1 wherein said predetermined criteria includes at least one condition parameter for use in identifying selected legal requirements which necessitate an invocation of at least one type of compliance action in order to comply with the selected legal requirements.

30 15. The method of claim 1 wherein said predetermined criteria includes at least one restriction parameter for use in identifying at least one type of compliance action to be

performed in order to comply with legal regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

5 16. A method for implementing electronic commerce transactions via a data network, the method comprising:

identifying a regulated item selected by a customer, the regulated item corresponding to an item which satisfies predetermined criteria, the predetermined criteria indicating that the item is prohibited from being purchased by the customer;

10 taking action to prevent the purchase of the regulated item via the data network by the customer;

wherein said taking action is automatically implemented at a server system configured to implement electronic commerce transactions between an on-line merchant and the customer; and

15 wherein said taking action comprises modifying a display of items available for purchase by the customer, wherein the display modification includes restricting display of items which are prohibited from being purchased by the customer based upon the predetermined criteria

20 17. The method of claim 16 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific time periods.

25 19. The method of claim 17 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific days.

30 20. The method of claim 17 wherein the regulated item corresponds to a class of regulated products selected from the group consisting of: alcohol products, tobacco products, and dairy products.

21. The method of claim 16 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which prohibit delivery of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

5 22. The method of claim 16 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons under a minimum age.

23. A method for implementing electronic commerce transactions via a data network, the method comprising:

10 identifying a regulated item selected by a customer, the regulated item corresponding to an item which satisfies predetermined criteria, the predetermined criteria indicating that the item is prohibited from being purchased by the customer;

taking action to prevent the purchase of the regulated item via the data network by the customer;

15 wherein said taking action is automatically implemented at a server system configured to implement electronic commerce transactions between an on-line merchant and the customer; and

wherein said taking action comprises taking action to prevent the customer from adding the regulated item to an electronic shopping cart associated with the customer.

20 24. The method of claim 23 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

25 25. The method of claim 24 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific time periods.

26. The method of claim 24 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific days.

30 27. The method of claim 24 wherein the regulated item corresponds to a class of regulated products selected from the group consisting of: alcohol products, tobacco products, and dairy products.

28. The method of claim 23 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which prohibit delivery of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

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29. The method of claim 23 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons under a minimum age.

30. A method for implementing electronic commerce transactions via a data network, the method comprising:

identifying a regulated item selected by a customer, the regulated item corresponding to an item which satisfies predetermined criteria, the predetermined criteria indicating that the item is prohibited from being purchased by the customer;

taking action to prevent the purchase of the regulated item via the data network by the customer;

wherein said taking action is automatically implemented at a server system configured to implement electronic commerce transactions between an on-line merchant and the customer; and

wherein said taking action comprises taking action to prevent completion of a checkout operation for the regulated item.

31. The method of claim 30 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

32. The method of claim 31 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific time periods.

33. The method of claim 31 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific days.

34. The method of claim 31 wherein the regulated item corresponds to a class of regulated products selected from the group consisting of: alcohol products, tobacco products, and dairy products.

5 35. The method of claim 30 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which prohibit delivery of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

10 36. The method of claim 30 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons under a minimum age.

37. A system for implementing electronic commerce transactions via a data network, the system comprising:

15 means for identifying a regulated item selected by a customer, the regulated item corresponding to an item which satisfies predetermined criteria, the predetermined criteria indicating that the item is prohibited from being purchased by the customer; and

means for taking action to prevent the purchase of the regulated item via the data network by the customer.

20 38. The system of claim 37 wherein said taking action means is automatically implemented at a server system configured to implement electronic commerce transactions between an on-line merchant and the customer.

25 39. The system of claim 37 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

40. The system of claim 39 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific time periods.

30 41. The system of claim 39 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific days.

42. The system of claim 39 wherein the regulated item corresponds to a class of regulated products selected from the group consisting of: alcohol products, tobacco products, and dairy products.

5 43. The system of claim 37 wherein said taking action means comprises means for modifying a display of items available for purchase by the customer, wherein the display modification includes restricting display of items which are prohibited from being purchased by the customer based upon the predetermined criteria.

10 44. The system of claim 37 wherein said taking action means comprises means for taking action to prevent the customer from adding the regulated item to an electronic shopping cart associated with the customer.

15 45. The system of claim 37 wherein said taking action means comprises means for taking action to prevent the customer from completing a checkout operation for the regulated item.

20 46. The system of claim 37 wherein said predetermined criteria includes at least one regulation code parameter for use in identifying items which are associated with a class of regulated products; and

wherein said regulated item has associated therewith a specific regulation code parameter.

25 47. The system of claim 37 wherein said predetermined criteria includes at least one condition parameter for use in identifying selected legal requirements which necessitate an invocation of at least one type of compliance action in order to comply with the selected legal requirements.

30 48. The system of claim 37 wherein said predetermined criteria includes at least one restriction parameter for use in identifying at least one type of compliance action to be performed in order to comply with legal regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

49. A computer program product for implementing electronic commerce transactions via a data network, the computer program product comprising:

5 a computer usable medium having computer readable code embodied therein, the computer readable code comprising:

computer code for identifying a regulated item selected by a customer, the regulated item corresponding to an item which satisfies predetermined criteria, the predetermined criteria indicating that the item is prohibited from being purchased by the customer; and

10 computer code for taking action to prevent the purchase of the regulated item via the data network by the customer.

50. The computer program product of claim 49 wherein said taking action means is automatically implemented at a server computer program product configured to
15 implement electronic commerce transactions between an on-line merchant and the customer.

51. The computer program product of claim 49 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons in a
20 particular jurisdiction.

52. The computer program product of claim 51 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific time periods.

25 53. The computer program product of claim 51 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific days.

54. The computer program product of claim 51 wherein the regulated item corresponds to a class of regulated products selected from the group consisting of: alcohol
30 products, tobacco products, and dairy products.

55. The computer program product of claim 49 wherein said taking action means comprises computer code for modifying a display of items available for purchase by the customer, wherein the display modification includes restricting display of items which are prohibited from being purchased by the customer based upon the predetermined criteria.

56. The computer program product of claim 49 wherein said taking action means comprises computer code for taking action to prevent the customer from adding the regulated item to an electronic shopping cart associated with the customer.

57. The computer program product of claim 49 wherein said taking action means comprises computer code for taking action to prevent the customer from completing a checkout operation for the regulated item.

58. The computer program product of claim 49 wherein said predetermined criteria includes at least one regulation code parameter for use in identifying items which are associated with a class of regulated products; and

wherein said regulated item has associated therewith a specific regulation code parameter.

59. The computer program product of claim 49 wherein said predetermined criteria includes at least one condition parameter for use in identifying selected legal requirements which necessitate an invocation of at least one type of compliance action in order to comply with the selected legal requirements.

60. The computer program product of claim 49 wherein said predetermined criteria includes at least one restriction parameter for use in identifying at least one type of compliance action to be performed in order to comply with legal regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

61. A system for implementing electronic commerce transactions via a data network, the system comprising:

at least one CPU;

memory; and

at least one interface configured or designed to provide an interface with at least one customer via the data network;

5 the system being configured or designed to identify a regulated item selected by a customer, the regulated item corresponding to an item which satisfies predetermined criteria, the predetermined criteria indicating that the item is prohibited from being purchased by the customer; and

10 the system being configured or designed to take action to prohibit purchase, via the data network, of the regulated item by the customer.

62. The system of claim 61 wherein said system further configured to implement on-line sales of products to the customer.

15 63. The system of claim 61 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

64. The system of claim 63 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific time periods.

20 65. The system of claim 63 wherein the regulations restrict sales of the regulated item during specific days.

25 66. The system of claim 63 wherein the regulated item corresponds to a class of regulated products selected from the group consisting of: alcohol products, tobacco products, and dairy products.

30 67. The system of claim 61 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which prohibit delivery of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

68. The system of claim 61 wherein the predetermined criteria correspond to regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons under a minimum age.

69. The system of claim 61 wherein the system is further configured or
5 designed to modify a display of items available for purchase by the customer, wherein the display modification includes restricting display of items which are prohibited from being purchased by the customer based upon the predetermined criteria.

70. The system of claim 61 wherein the system is further configured or
10 designed to take action to prevent the customer from adding the regulated item to an electronic shopping cart associated with the customer.

71. The system of claim 61 wherein the system is further configured or
15 designed to take action to prevent the customer from completing a checkout operation for the regulated item.

72. The method of claim 61 wherein the system is further configured or
20 designed to remove the regulated item from an electronic shopping cart associated with the customer in response to a determination that the regulated item is not allowed to be purchased by the customer based upon the predetermined criteria.

73. The system of claim 61 wherein the processor is configured to store into the memory said predetermined criteria, the predetermined criteria including at least one regulation code parameter for use in identifying items which are associated with a class of
25 regulated products; and

wherein the system is configured to associate a specific regulation code parameter with the regulated item.

74. The system of claim 61 wherein the processor is configured to store into the
30 memory said predetermined criteria, the predetermined criteria including at least one condition parameter for use in identifying selected legal requirements which necessitate an

invocation of at least one type of compliance action in order to comply with the selected legal requirements.

5 75. The system of claim 61 wherein the processor is configured to store into the memory said predetermined criteria, the predetermined criteria including at least one restriction parameter for use in identifying at least one type of compliance action to be performed in order to comply with legal regulations which restrict sales of the regulated item to persons in a particular jurisdiction.

10 76. The system of claim 61 further comprising:
an inventory subsystem comprising memory, said inventory subsystem including an inventory database configured or designed to maintain inventory records of a plurality of items of merchandise;

15 a customer interface subsystem in communication with the inventory subsystem, said customer interface subsystem being configured or designed to store available inventory data from said inventory subsystem, and further being configured or designed to present selected item information relating to said inventory merchandise to at least one customer, said customer interface subsystem being further configured or designed to facilitate customer shopping transactions, and to store customer order information; and

20 an order fulfillment subsystem in communication with said inventory subsystem, said order fulfillment subsystem being configured or designed to receive said customer order information, said order information including at least one customer order for at least one item, said order fulfillment subsystem further being configured or designed to facilitate fulfillment of said customer order, wherein fulfillment of a customer order
25 includes obtaining at least a portion of items relating to the order, and preparing the obtained items for shipment to the customer.

30 77. The system of claim 76 further comprising a delivery subsystem in communication with said customer interface subsystem and said inventory subsystem, said delivery subsystem being configured or designed to receive items relating to at least one fulfilled customer order, said delivery subsystem further being configured or designed to facilitate delivery of said received items to said at least one customer.